



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

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**MEDIA RELEASE
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**PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS
and
“OPERATION BEANTOWN”**

**MANCHESTER WOMAN CONVICTED OF FEDERAL CRACK COCAINE
DISTRIBUTION AND WEAPONS CHARGES**

Re: United States v. Antwone Cousins

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE -- United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, N.H. State Police Colonel Gary Sloper, and Manchester Police Chief Mark Driscoll announced that **Antwone Cousins**, date of birth of December 1, 1981, of Manchester, NH was convicted today of crack cocaine distribution and weapons charges.

COUSINS was arrested by Manchester and New Hampshire State Police officers on October 15, 2002, along with ten others, as part of their joint “Operation Beantown” investigation, so named because of its focus on alleged Boston-based drug traffickers that had relocated to Manchester.

COUSINS entered a guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr. to an information alleging that he distributed cocaine base, also known as “crack cocaine,” in Manchester on August 26, 2002, and unlawfully possessed 9mm ammunition in his Concord St., Manchester apartment on October 16, 2003. Federal law prohibits unlawful drug users from possessing firearms and ammunition. COUSINS was detained Judge DiClerico pending a sentencing hearing scheduled for May 19, 2003. He faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, “This case demonstrates our Office’s commitment to aggressively prosecuting drug traffickers, including the street-level crack dealers operating in Manchester and New Hampshire’s other larger cities. Operation Beantown is a prime example of the effectiveness of cooperative efforts between federal, state, and local law enforcement

agencies in combating the disastrous impact of crack cocaine on our urban neighborhoods and their residents. This Office will continue to commit federal resources to these efforts.”

U.S. Attorney Colantuono also stated: “Antwone Cousins’ conviction also exemplifies this Office’s commitment to aggressive prosecution of the federal firearms laws as mandated by Attorney General Ashcroft’s “Project Safe Neighborhoods” initiative. Keeping firearms out of the hands of unlawful drug users and traffickers is one of our main objectives. This office will vigorously enforce the federal firearms laws as we continue to implement Project Safe Neighborhoods in the District of New Hampshire.”

The conviction resulted from a joint investigation conducted by the Manchester Police Department’s Special Investigations Unit and the N.H. State Police Narcotics Investigation Unit. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante.